(b) if so, what measures are being taken to encourage indigenous production thereof;

(c) the number of Indian companies who are producing such handsets;

(d) the reason that the domestic efforts at manufacturing of handsets are being blocked; and

(e) the detail thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) To encourage indigenous manufacture of mobile phones, the government has exempted all inputs required for the manufacture of mobile phones from customs duty. Excise duty has also been exempted on manufacture of mobile phones.

(c) Two companies, namely LG and Elcoteq have reported commencement of production of handsets.

(d) and (e) There is no blockage to domestic efforts ti encourage domestic manufacture of handsets. A number of leading companies Nokia, Motorola, Samsung, etc. have taken steps to manufacture mobile handsets in India.

Promotion of broadband in Karnataka

3220. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken so far by B.S.N.L. in Karnataka to promote the use of broadband connections in Karnataka; and

(b) the amount spent so far and proposed to be spent in this regard during 2005-06 in Karnataka?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEELAHMAD): (a) Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) had launched its broadband service under the brand name of Data One on 14.01.2005. Presently, broadband service has been launched by BSNL in 15 cities of Karnataka with a customer base of 44313 connections. The same is planned to be extended to all district headquarters of Karnataka in a progressive manner. The important measures being taken by BSNL to boost usage of broadband services in

Karnataka at the minimum cost are as listed below:

(i) Wide range of plans for different segments of residential and broadband customers.

(ii) Reducing the minimum tariff of broadband plans to Rs. 250 and also providing competitive tariff in the market in all other plans.

(iii) Country wide single toll free number 16004241600 for any type of enquiry.

(iv) Encouraging existing dial up internet customers to upgrade to broadband connections by providing them with free registration and installation of plan 250 broadband connection and also providing them with a free trial offer for 2 months.

(v) Engaging engineering students for undertaking the job of sale and installation of broadband connection.

(vi) Distribution of pamphlets and leaflets through telephone bills, newspapers and other channels containing FAQs on broadband for the benefit of customers and other marketing initiatives.

(vii) Giving presentation and demonstrations to subscribers in collegs, universities and corporate houses regarding the usefulness of broadband in their business.

(viii) Providing a choice of different types of customer premises equipment including that with wi-fi interface.

(ix) Offering bundled Personal Computor (PC) and Broadband connections.

(b) The amount spent so far in this regard in Karnataka by BSNL is around Rs. 38 crores and around Rs. 8 crores is proposed to be spent further for the year 2005-06.

Service tax on the largest source of revenue

3221. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that according to the ASSOCHAM-ECO PLUS study released recently, the Communications Ministry is getting its largest source of revenue through service tax and is going to get Rs. 12,650 crores by 2007-08;

(b) if so, the anticipated subscriber base in the country, State-wise, by 2007-08; land-line-wise and mobile-wise;